



I had a chance to spend a moment with String, an African Penguin, and Laurie Macha from the Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration during an event in January promoting the maintenance of funding for tourism in Connecticut. As we all know, tourism means jobs—especially in our part of the state.

Growing Green Jobs in Connecticut

Connecticut joined 25 other states this year in passing “green jobs” legislation. In order to help grow jobs, the bill would have required the state to apply for any federal “green jobs” funding and to establish a program to create green jobs and promote green energy and conservation. The bill also emphasized using the resources of Connecticut’s existing green industries, such as biofuels, solar panel manufacturers and our strong fuel cell industry. Unfortunately, this bill was vetoed by the governor.



HELPING FAMILIES SURVIVE THE RECESSION

For Those on the Brink of Foreclosure

The housing market crash has had a devastating effect on our state and national economies. Connecticut has been a leader in its effort to keep people in their homes and stabilize property values for all homeowners. We built on that success this year by expanding two important mortgage assistance programs. A new law now requires banks and homeowners to work together to explore options before any foreclosure takes place. The law also improves regulation of mortgage professionals and expands the banking commissioner’s enforcement and investigative authority.



State Senator  
**Andrea Stillman**

Legislative Office Building, Room 3600, Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
Capitol Phone: 1-800-842-1420  
E-mail: [Stillman@senatedems.ct.gov](mailto:Stillman@senatedems.ct.gov)  
Web: [www.SenatorStillman.cga.ct.gov](http://www.SenatorStillman.cga.ct.gov)



Dear Neighbor,

The global recession has hit Connecticut hard. People have lost their jobs and even their homes. At the same time, the state’s budget deficit reached a record high of \$8.5 billion.

Our challenge this legislative session was not simply to balance the budget; we were determined to help grow jobs and protect working families and middle-class folks who are struggling to survive the recession.

We did it by passing a fair budget that makes tough cuts, protects funding for education and small businesses, and avoids across-the-board tax increases. I’m also pleased that we passed bills that will help fight breast cancer and autism, protect consumers from identity theft, and preserve our environment.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Andrea Stillman  
State Senator

I’m proud to represent the  
20th Senate District:  
East Lyme,  
Montville,  
New London,  
Old Lyme,  
Old Saybrook,  
Salem & Waterford

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State Senator  
**Andrea Stillman**  
20th District

# LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

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## Fighting for a Fair Budget

In September, the General Assembly and Governor Rell agreed on a budget for the next two years. The compromise budget includes more than **\$3 billion in spending cuts—the largest reduction in state history**. We did it by cutting costs in every agency and all parts of government.

At the same time, we were able to protect middle-class families, the elderly, children and the poor from devastating cuts to critical services. Democrats also made the tax code fairer by raising revenues from joint filers making more than \$1 million a year. The budget will help stabilize Connecticut's economy and help families survive this difficult time.

## Protecting Families From Reckless Cuts

Despite efforts by some to make reckless cuts, I stood up for these and other important programs and services:

- ▶ **The LIFE STAR** medical helicopter has helped save lives in every town and city in Connecticut. It is an especially vital service for those in rural parts of the state.
- ▶ **Higher education scholarships** help students and their parents afford college. A recession is the worst time to reduce scholarships and financial aid.
- ▶ **Public libraries** add so much to our towns and cities. Across-the-board cuts, as some proposed, would have hit them hard.
- ▶ **School-based health centers** help protect children from epidemics, such as the flu. Deep cuts to these centers would have undermined public health.



In June, I joined other lawmakers inside the LIFE STAR helicopter hangar at Backus Hospital in Norwich to urge Governor Rell to rethink her proposal to eliminate the \$1.39 million subsidy the state provides to this life-saving program.

## ‘Silver Alert’ System for Missing Seniors

This year we established a ‘Silver Alert’ to help locate missing seniors and disabled adults, comparable to the AMBER Alert system that helps find missing children. The system will engage public safety agencies in a search for vulnerable persons and prepare first responders for a potential rescue. The public will be notified through radio, television and electronic highway signs.

## Reverse 9-1-1 to Keep Your Family Safe

The legislature passed a law revolutionizing the way police officers and firefighters are able to help you and your family in an emergency. Within the 9-1-1 emergency system information typically flows one way: from you to the dispatcher. Under a new law, emergency personnel will be able to use the 9-1-1 system to contact residents. This technology can be used to speed up evacuation of an area facing a natural disaster, to guide citizens to shelter in the event of a chemical spill, or to enlist aid in finding a missing child, Alzheimer's patient or fugitive.



## Criminal Penalties for Identity Theft

Identity theft is a serious crime that can have devastating consequences for victims who spend, on average, \$1,180 and 60 hours cleaning up their credit record. Damaged credit makes it tough to get a good interest rate on a car loan, home mortgage or credit card. This year, we created a new law that expands the definition of “identity theft” and increases the penalties for those who target seniors.

## Helping Those Who’ve Sacrificed for Our State and Country

Many families are having a hard time making ends meet right now, and this includes military families. The General Assembly passed legislation that expands eligibility for the Military Relief Fund to immediate relatives of Connecticut-domiciled armed forces members, including Connecticut National Guard members who are not on active duty. This fund is used by the state to pay for essential personal or household goods or services, such as repairs, uninsured medical services, transportation or school supplies if paying for them is a hardship because of a member's service.

## WORKING FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM



## Comprehensive Reform On the Way

Skyrocketing health care costs are squeezing businesses and families. President Obama has said the status quo is unaffordable—that's why he's fighting for national reform and why we're working hard on health care in Connecticut.

Thanks to the passage of Sustinet, Connecticut is well-positioned to be a national leader on health care reform. This bold initiative seeks to overhaul the state's

health care system by focusing on improved quality and access to services, addressing coverage for the uninsured and controlling skyrocketing costs. The legislature will receive detailed recommendations in 2011 with the goal of lowering costs and expanding access.

## Life-Saving Help for Children With Asthma

Should children suffering from asthma and severe allergies be prevented from carrying potentially life-saving asthma inhalers and “epipens” with them at school? The parents of asthmatics and children with allergies believe the answer is no and urged lawmakers to change the law. Not having these life-saving devices immediately at hand can have serious health consequences, such as medical complications and hospitalizations. We listened to parents' concerns and adopted new regulations that allow students to instantly self-administer a life-saving dose of medicine.



## Health Insurance for Autism

Help is on the way for the thousands of families in Connecticut with children who suffer from autism spectrum disorders. The General Assembly approved groundbreaking legislation that made Connecticut the tenth state in the nation to mandate comprehensive health insurance coverage for autism. It requires certain health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including

behavioral therapy for a child age 15 or younger and certain prescription drugs and psychiatric and psychological services. This will improve treatment for children with autism and provide a substantial savings in medical costs for their families.